

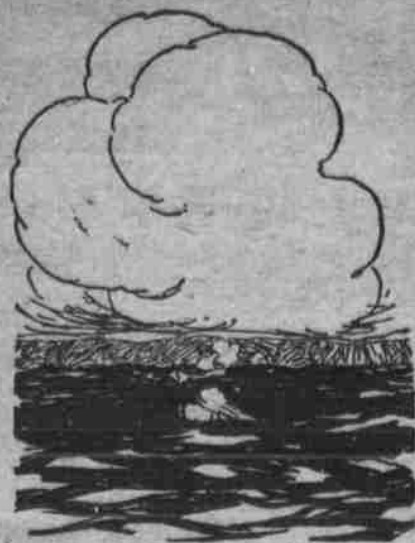
HOLTON OF THE NAVY

A STORY OF THE FREEING OF CUBA

By Lawrence Perry
Author of "Dan Merrifew," "Prince of Chambliss," etc.

Illustrations by
Ellsworth Young

COPYRIGHT, A. C. CLAUDE & CO. 1915 - COPYRIGHTED IN GREAT BRITAIN



CHAPTER I.

Hope and Disappointment.

Lieutenant Thomas Holton, commander of the Scorpion, made as though to place the dispatch in his pocket, then, taking pity upon his "second," who was all eyes, he turned the paper over to his junior lieutenant, known throughout the flotilla as "Bobby" Frost.

"You will leave Newport News at ten o'clock tonight with the destroyer Scorpion and proceed south to the parent ship of the First Torpedo Boat Flotilla off Key West, prepared for action."

This order was warmly welcomed by Holton and by his second in command of the grim, lead-colored Scorpion.

"It looks like business, doesn't it?" observed Frost, with tentative inflection in his voice.

"It does, sure," chuckled Holton. "I'm glad we had those battle-plates fixed in the boiler. I suppose we might as well have the war-heads fixed on the torpedoes, too. The orders say 'prepare for action.' Attend to it, will you, Frost?"

"Aye, aye, sir," and Frost hurried along the grimy, oily deck to the after companionway.

The somewhat informal nature of the dialogue between the two will be forgiven by the fastidious when it is pointed out that for a month the Scorpion had been lying at Newport News on detached duty of a confidential nature under direct orders from Washington, and that Holton's sole companion aboard ship in that time had been his young second. But the period of loneliness was evidently to end in a burst of glory and Lieutenant Holton was truly thankful.

In the preceding month the mighty battle-ship Maine had wallowed down into the slimy ooze of Havana Harbor, a great hole torn in her forward compartments. In her lay one of Holton's best friends, a shipmate of pleasant days following graduation at the Naval Academy. The cry, "Remember the Maine," was sounding from Maine itself to California. The entire country was on the qui vive. Osgood, the hero of many an American football gridiron, had, as a Cuban volunteer, given up his life at the side of a machine gun; Frederick Funston had served valiantly against the tyrants of Castile and Aragon, and other Americans had given evidence that the fighting spirit was by no means dormant in the heart of a nation of "pigs and tradesmen."

With the situation thus there was little cause for wonder at Lieutenant Holton's emotions of mental exaltation. Whatever the future might hold for him, at least this seemed certain: there would be action, and that is something for which your true gentleman of the service is ever on the watch.

Something of the mood of the two young officers was communicated to the crew. There were broad grins on all the men's faces as they hurried about the performance of the various tasks, and many of them did not forbear to turn inquiring faces toward their officers whenever occasion offered—which expressions, naturally their officers "faded" to see.

At sunset everything was in readiness, and with a sigh of relief Holton stretched himself on the narrow seat running along the mess-room and lovingly filled his pipe. Frost did likewise and then looked over at his superior.

"By George!" he cried, "think of having the opportunity of putting into practice all the things we've learned!"

"It won't be bad run at all," replied Holton.

Frost was about to utter another thought when the doorway was darkened by the figure of a messenger.

"A telegram for Lieutenant Holton," he said, saluting.

Holton took it hastily and ran over the contents. His face clouded and he read it again. A good strong word was trembling on his lips, and he was about to crumple the dispatch in his hand when his eye fell on the messenger standing at attention.

"Oh, thank you," he said; "there is no answer."

As the messenger departed Holton handed the telegram to his second without a word.

"You will proceed at once to Washington and report to me at the earliest

possible moment. Lieutenant Frost will assume command of Scorpion in your absence. ROOSEVELT."

As Frost read the message aloud his voice quivered with excitement. "What does that mean?" he exclaimed.

"Hanged if I know," growled Holton. "Isn't that just my luck! I've been working on this old pot trying to get her into shape and hoping and praying for a chance to make good, and then when there appears to be something doing, why I get skinned this way."

Frost knew exactly how the commander felt, and his natural exaltation at being placed in command of the destroyer was quite swallowed up in his sympathy for a man who was his good friend as well as his superior officer.

Holton sat for a while blowing blue clouds of smoke to the ceiling, outwardly calm, but inwardly seething. He went over every act in the past month or so, but could think of nothing he had done that would warrant his recall in disgrace.

"Well, Bobby," he said at length, "you're a real live captain now. And I congratulate you."

"I feel like a man who is going to put on a pair of boots that are too big for him," remarked Frost.

"Oh, nonsense!" smiled Holton. "You're in every way qualified. I'll vouch for you, Bobby."

Frost smiled. "Thanks," he said; "I'd rather have that from you than from almost anyone I know."

"Well," laughed Holton, "take it then; it's sincere. He arose and called to the steward."

"Oh, you, Koko," he said, "come in here and help me pack. I'm going to leave you for a while."

Dinner that evening was rather a mournful affair, neither Holton nor Frost trying to make light of the mysterious situation.

He shook hands with Frost at eight o'clock, and with Koko carrying his bag, started for the station. He had delayed rather longer than he should have done in writing supplementary letters to his parents, and now he found it was necessary to make haste if he was to catch the train for Washington. Eventually, indeed, he and Koko had to run, and as he reached the station the cars were pulling out.

The Jap threw the bag into the open doors of the rear one and Holton made the steps with a flying leap. As he did so a man who had been following the two essayed a similar flight, but his feet missed the steps and he clung to the gilded rail with his left hand.

As Holton reached down to assist him the man lost his grip and went plunging head over heels into the gravel. Evidently his fall did not injure him, for as Holton peered back along the rails he saw the fellow rise slowly and shake his fist at the departing train.

If he had known the circumstances under which he was to meet this stranger at a time not far distant, his feeling of relief when he saw that the man was not seriously injured might have been tinged by emotions of various sorts.

Having put up at the Metropolitan club, Holton passed such time as had to elapse before the assistant secretary would be at his desk in the Navy Department building in a fever of impatience.

Having at length finished his cigar and his morning paper—which bristled with bellicose matter—Holton put on his hat and overcoat and sauntered slowly toward the Capitol. At ten o'clock he went over to the Navy Department and sent his card in to the assistant secretary.

Presently his summons came while yet another man was engaged in the inner office. This man, however, brushed off past Holton as the young officer, with mingled emotion, walked into the presence of Secretary Long's assistant.

"Good morning, Mr. Holton." Certainly no evil augury was to be detected in the hearty cadence of the greeting. "Sit down, sir. I'm glad you were so prompt. That's what we need in these days."

"Thank you, sir," said Holton dubiously.

The assistant secretary observed him keenly for a moment, and then apparently satisfied with his scrutiny, he

arose and paced up and down the length of his office.

"By George, Mr. Holton!" he said, "when you realize that war is coming—coming as sure as guns, and then consider our unpreparedness for it—it makes you glad it's Spain and not someone else."

"I think the navy's pretty fit, sir," ventured Holton.

"Ah, the navy! And the army!" The words came out like bullets. "The navy is all right, and the army, too, what there is of it. The fighting men of both arms of the service are the best this world ever saw: getting things started, that is the trouble. Well, thank Heaven, Dewey's—the assistant secretary stopped short, and craning his neck forward, characteristically thrust his square jaw close to the officer's face. We've all got to do the best we can and be sure that when the blow comes it will come from, and not toward us."

Holton nodded slightly.

"I liked your action in diving overboard and rescuing two of your men last summer," resumed Mr. Roosevelt. "And I may say that a study of your record has convinced me that just at present a little respite from duties aboard the Scorpion will accrue to our mutual advantage."

The assistant secretary paused, and then as Holton made no reply, he continued:

"We are not yet at war with Spain—not yet, and in the meantime I think it will be just as well for you to remain in fairly close touch with my office—personal touch. By the way, there's a ball at the Willard tonight—" "A ball!" exclaimed Holton. Then he caught himself. "Yes, sir," he added.

"Yes, a ball at the Willard. Here is a card—you'll note it is a personal invitation to you."

Holton glanced at it.

"I see it, sir." He hesitated. "I am—merely, merely to go there and dance? I mean—mean, sir, are there any instructions?"

"I should keep my eyes and ears open if I were you."

"Yes, sir, I'll do that, and I hope I'll be able to be of some service," he was rising to go. "Although—although I'm afraid I lack—that is, and—" Holton paused and glanced irresolutely at his chief.

"That you lack definite information," said the assistant secretary, who seemed



"That Man Especially is Worth Watching."

ed to have the faculty of reading his thoughts and expressing them before Holton himself could frame them in suitable, or, we'll say, diplomatic terms.

"Why, yes, sir—I have a feeling that the situation is indefinite."

"Yes. Sit down, Mr. Holton." Holton resumed his chair and his chief leaned forward, talking rapidly in a low tone.

"Here is the nub of the situation," he began. "In the first place we have reason, excellent reasons, for suspecting that there are certain elements among the Cubans, both in the United States and in Havana, that are strongly inclined to doubt the good faith of the United States in this brewing trouble with Spain."

Holton, thrilled by the promise of revelations which these opening words

conveyed, thrilled, also, by his induction into the inner affairs of the government mill, flushed and regarded the eyeglasses turned toward him, with unblinking eyes, impatient for the next word.

"Naturally," continued Mr. Roosevelt, "the Cubans are eager to avail themselves of our armed forces afloat and ashore, but after the work is all done they want us to clear out. Which, of course, we shall do, having first established some decent and stable system of government down there."

"I had not any idea our good faith was in question," observed Holton.

"It is," was the reply, "and it is taking the form of preparations for an attack upon our troops by Cuban forces after we have cleaned the Spaniards out of the island."

"What a chance!" exclaimed Holton, with patriotic fervor.

The assistant secretary smiled.

"I myself regard the project as crack-brained in its conception, but nevertheless it exists and must be met. We must learn their plans at all hazards, and I can tell you now that while we have a general idea as to the situation, it is little more than general, and details of a specific nature would be very welcome. I want you to see what you can do. Your record is that of a clear-headed man of initiative and common sense. You speak Spanish, you are equally at home in a ballroom or in roughing it. You're the man we want."

"Thank you, sir."

"I have been extremely confidential," resumed the assistant secretary, "as naturally it was necessary I should be. Any further information I receive from the Secret Service will be transmitted to you, and in turn I shall expect you to keep us in touch with matters as you develop them. Now then, at the ball tonight you are to become acquainted with the following if you can locate them."

He handed Holton several sheets of typewritten matter, headed by half-tone photographs.

"That man especially is worth watching," continued Holton's chief, pointing to the portrait of a well-appearing Cuban, apparently about fifty years old, "and this girl also."

"I understand," said Holton. I have a good idea of what you want, I think. Mr. Secretary, and I hope I don't have to tell you that I shall leave nothing undone to carry out your wishes."

"You don't," was the smiling reply.

"It is rather new ground, but it will be interesting work, and will give me a chance to see action, perhaps, before the rest of the crowd."

The assistant secretary smiled.

"Thinking of the Scorpion, eh," he laughed. "Well, I'll wager a new suit of clothes against an apple that you'll soon have so much to occupy your mind that your destroyer will be nothing but a hazy memory."

"I'll try to make it so, at all events," laughed Holton. "Good morning, sir."

"Good morning. You may report here until further orders every day at this hour."

"Yes, sir," Holton turned and left the office.

The assistant secretary wheeled around in his swivel-chair and thought deeply for a moment. Then he picked up a paper.

"By George!" he murmured, "that young chap is in for a bully time."

Meantime Holton walked cheerily to his club, and there met several brother officers who were keen for billiards. So the remainder of the day was spent at this diversion.

He had a table at the Willard for dinner, whence he intended to proceed to the dance. He dressed with great care, and at the last thrust into his hip pocket an article not usually regarded in polite society as a complement of evening attire—a short, thick, very serviceable-appearing revolver.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Explanation of Potlatch.

The word potlatch is a corruption of an Indian word common among the Pacific coast tribes, meaning festival of gifts. At a patshat (potlatch) celebration the more personal property an Indian gives away, blankets, ornaments, etc., the higher he stands in the estimation of his neighbors, and the more he expects to receive in return at the next potlatch. The festival is also accompanied by music, dancing and feasting.

GAS, DYSPEPSIA AND INDIGESTION

"Pape's Diapepsin" settles sour, gassy stomachs in five minutes—Time It!

You don't want a slow remedy when your stomach is bad—or an uncertain one—or a harmful one—your stomach is too valuable; you mustn't injure it.

Pape's Diapepsin is noted for its speed in giving relief; its harmlessness; its certain unfailing action in regulating sick, sour, gassy stomachs. Its millions of cures in indigestion, dyspepsia, gastritis and other stomach trouble has made it famous the world over.

Keep this perfect stomach doctor in your home—keep it handy—get a large fifty-cent case from any dealer and then if anyone should eat something which doesn't agree with them; if what they eat lays like lead, ferments and sours and forms gas; causes headache, dizziness and nausea; eructations of acid and undigested food—remember as soon as Pape's Diapepsin comes in contact with the stomach all such distress vanishes. Its promptness, certainty and ease in overcoming the worst stomach disorders is a revelation to those who try it.—Adv.

Needed Supply of Oatmeal.

It is the nature of an Irishman to give a spice of whimsical humor to commonplace incidents of observation. Pat was crossing a broad, shallow stream, carrying a bag of oatmeal upon his back. Mike watched him from the bank. Now, a hole had broken in the bottom of the bag, and as Pat moved the oatmeal trickled down in a thin rivulet into the water.

"Pat," shouted Mike from the bank, "I'm thinking if the oatmeal isn't plenty with you, you'll have thin porridge."

Calumet the Secret of Economy

The high cost of living nowadays, and the way prices are steadily climbing skyward, is making economy in the kitchen even more important than it was in the good old days of our thrifty ancestors. But how to achieve economy? There's the rub!

In many lines, it depends almost entirely on the housewife's knowledge of foods and on her watchfulness—but fortunately, in one line, baking, economy can be made almost automatic by the use of the famous Calumet Baking Powder.

Economy in baking, as every good cook knows, depends not so much on economy in buying the materials as on the success of her bakings. Failures mean waste—bigger losses by far than the savings she makes in buying. And the fact that Calumet absolutely prevents failures and makes every baking successful has made it the favorite of every cook that seeks to be economical. In other words, Calumet is the secret of economy in baking.

It is the purest, too—attested by hundreds of leading physicians—and as for its general quality, it is enough to say that Calumet has received the highest awards at two World's Pure Food Expositions—one in Chicago, Ill., and the other in Paris, France, in March, 1912. Adv.

Their Advantage.

"I see where the British militant suffragettes have now added a sleep strike to the hunger one."

"Yes, they are wide-awake ones."

Coughs and Colds cannot hold out against Dean's Mentholated Cough Drops. A single dose gives relief—So at all Druggists.

Every once in awhile you meet a man whose actions you can't fully describe without swearing.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for Children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic, soothes a bottle.

Don't stint the living in order to strew flowers on the graves of the dead.

Putnam Fadeless Dyes do not stain the hands. Adv.

A good manager can be his own boss.

Rheumatism Is Torture

Many pains that pass as rheumatism are due to weak kidneys—to the failure of the kidneys to drive off uric acid thoroughly.

When you suffer aching, bad joints, backache too, dizziness and some urinary disturbances, get Doan's Kidney Pills, the remedy that is recommended by over 150,000 people in many different lands.

Doan's Kidney Pills help weak kidneys to drive out the uric acid which is the cause of backache, rheumatism and lumbago.

Here's proof.

"Every Picture Tells a Story."



A SOUTH DAKOTA CASE

W. B. Smart, Belle Fourche, S. D., says: "Rheumatism caused me terrible suffering. I had to give up work. I had to be lifted around and was perfectly helpless. Doan's Kidney Pills acted like magic in driving away the rheumatism. It soon left me entirely and I haven't had an attack since."

Get Doan's at Any Store, 50c a Box
DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS
FOSTER-MILBURN CO., BUFFALO, N. Y.